HOW DID ISLAM EXPAND?

After Muhammad’s death, Islamic Empire expanded from Arabian Peninsula to the Atlantic Ocean in the West and to the Indian Ocean in the East

A) The Expansion Of Islam (632-846)

- **632** (Muhammad’s death: Arabian Peninsula had converted to Islam, initiating a military expansion)

- **7th century**: expansion by Byzantine territories (Syria, Egypt) and Persian Empire.

- **8th century**: they reached Indus river; besieged Constantinople without conquering it. They expanded by North Africa, Hispania (711-718), and were rejected from France (Poitiers, 732).

- **9th century**: Nubia (South of Egypt) and southern Italy (846).

The Islamic Empire (Caliphate) absorbed several cultures and dominated trade between Asia and the Mediterranean sea.
B) The Organisation of the Caliphate:
During the middle ages different dynasties governed the Islamic Empire:

- **First four caliphs (632-661):** Muhammad’s family members. During this period the Islam was divided for the first time into two groups:
  - **Shia:** They believe the caliph should be chosen from Muhammad’s descendents. They only accept the Koran.
  - **Sunnis:** The caliph could be any devout Muslim believer. They use the Koran and the Sunnah or book of islamic laws and traditions.

- **Umayyad dynasty (661-750):** Capital of their empire: Damascus. During their dynasty, the Caliphate conquered Spain and other regions.

- **Abbasid dynasty (750-1258):** Capital city: Baghdad. During their period some parts of the empire got independent from the empire.

- **Turks (Ottoman dynasty):** Up to the XXth century. In 1453 the conquered Constantinople.

C) Cultural and economic splendour
- The spread Arabic language. Also, Muslims enjoyed economic and social benefits, so most of population converted to Islam (Islamization).
- They promoted schools and libraries.
- They spread the use and production of paper as a new writing material.
- Ancient Greek and Roman books was translated and their culture spread.